

Oxford Democrat.

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G. W. SILLMAN.

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POETRY.

The wail of the breeze.

There's a wail upon the breeze,
A sad and mournful sound,
Thrilling among the forest trees,
That wildly sweep around.
It strikes upon the startled ear,
Like moanings from the slain;
Breathes o'er the withering leaf of fear,
Thou fift breeze again!

I come from where bright waters flow,
Beneath the wild-wood shade,
To tell in accents faint and low,
The wreck which death has made:
My path hath been by new-made graves;
With rude stones unheeded high;
Sought eaze the rustling pine-tree waves,
Where death's cold sleepers lie!

They passed in silence, one by one,
That quiet household band,
As from our vision sinks the sun,
To greet a fairer land.
Beside an ever murmuring stream,
Where child and sire are laid.

I come from o'er the glittering sea,
With dewy fragrance fraught;
From hills, with sweetly murmuring trees,
A wailing tone I caught.
From flowers bathed in liquid gem,
I brought a fragrant breath,
Yet my sweet voice was unto them
The hidden plague of death.

They all are gone! The breeze gone by,
The night-bird sings her strain;
The vesper hymn is heard and high
Upon my ear again.
Yet come not with such melting power,
Glad sounds from land or sea,
As that low wail, at twilight hour,
Upon the breeze, to me.

REFLECTIVE.

CREDULITY.—A love for the Marvellous is an innate principle of the human mind—the rude and the refined in all ages have been its victims. Mankind have a strange fancy for indulging a preference over the real—the mysterious, to the matter of fact. A certain degree of credulity is indispensable to prevent universal skepticism—for what may have been repudiated at one time as an error, may since have become an ascertained truth; how many such instances have occurred in medical science, although in the matter of patent medicines, although in the majority of cases they have done little good or harm, yet society is beginning to believe that quackery may be found within, as well as without the orthodox circle of the faculty. Men do not ascribe an epileptic fit to witchcraft, or appeal to the stellar as their harbinger of fate and fortune. The world has grown ashamed of the rule playthings of its early days. Roger Bacon and Dr. Dee would cut a sorry figure as alchemists and astrologers, in our day; and yet do we not exhibit a like proclivity in things scarcely less apocryphal? All admit the marvellous impostures and cheats which are being constantly practised upon the community; yet we seem rather to cherish the humbug.

It cannot but be considered a morbid condition of taste therefore, that thus ever craves for its sustenance something extravagant as believed, improbable or impossible. The Delphic oracles are with us under the metamorphosis of the fortune teller. If we have no "South Sea bubble," we have at least the Gold fever of California in all its intensity, whirling up all generous home affections, and whirling the national brain with its intoxicating delirium. It is no less true that the spirit of Joanna Southcott still exists in the leaders of the Mormon faith. Milleries take but the course adopted by "sixth monarch men," and although these semi-fanatics may be exemplary in other respects, yet they are in this particular monomaniacs, and should be cared for accordingly. The "Socialists" seem determined, at least in France, to take care of themselves at least for the present.

Says the great poet—"The earth hath bubbles, as the water hath," and these are of them. But as we said, a national degree of credence is essential to our social economy. What, if all the warlike propensities of the mutual faith of society? We need the cementing influence of mutual confidence and faith, as essentially as the great globe we inhabit does the two antagonistic forces which hold it in its sphere. Besides we are not to expect always to gauge our belief by the measure of unequivocal demonstrable evidence; it is reason's province to receive or reject a proposition according to the value of its testimony. Plato and the ancient sages thus of a year in point of time, and a transposition of actually abolished slavery where it existed by law—in all the upper half of Louisiana—from man that has ever appeared on the face of the earth; and of this the anti-slavery party of the

the adaptation of steam, as a motive power, or of electricity being reduced to living letters of fire—that made mankind till recently skeptical of truths then so occult. Are we not indeed encompassed all around by mysteries, and truths yet to be revealed: what do we know of the principle of our very vitality—of even our corporeal frame?

"What a miracle is man to man!
Two natures marvellously mixed—
Midway from nothing to the Deity."

Some persons, however, make a boast of being doubters on all subjects—saying, perhaps, the fact of their own existence, and the equally certain event of its termination some day. The "Golden Mean"—the happy medium lies between heartless skepticism on the one side, and ignorantly credulity on the other.

POLITICAL.

Colonel Benton's Speech.

Col. Benton commences his speech to his constituents, the people of Missouri, by acknowledging the receipt of certain resolutions passed by the legislature of Missouri, denying the right of congress to legislate upon the subject of slavery in territories—asserting the right of the citizens of every state to remove to the territories, acquired by the blood and treasure of the whole Union, with their property declaring it to be an insult to the states to exclude any of their citizens from so removing and settling with their property—alleging such insult to be the cause of alienation among the states, and ultimately of disunion; and instructing the senators of the state, and requesting its representatives to vote in conformity to the resolves so adopted. These resolutions, he says are merely a copy of resolutions offered in the United States senate, February 19, 1847, by Mr. Calhoun—the only difference between them being, that Mr. Calhoun's tend "directly," and the Missouri resolutions tend "ultimately," to a dissolution of the Union; and even this difference is not material, as the Missouri resolutions pledge the state to co-operate with other slaveholding states. He therefore speaks to Mr. Calhoun's resolutions first.

In 1820, he says, Mr. Calhoun being a member of president Monroe's cabinet, was required to give his opinion in writing on the question of the power of congress to prohibit slavery in territories, and the constitutionality of the eighth section of the act for the admission of Missouri into the Union, and which section applied the anti-slavery clause of the ordinance of 1787, to more than half the whole territory of Louisiana. Mr. Calhoun then gave his opinion in favor of the constitutionality of the act; and no whisper ever heard from him to the contrary, until the introduction of his firebrand resolutions twenty-seven years after. These resolutions, Mr. Benton says were introduced by Mr. Calhoun, to make a test for himself at the presidential election which no northern man could stand. Before the debate came on, however, the proofs of the opinion which Mr. Calhoun, gave in 1820 were brought forward to his utter confusion and the entire prostration of his resolutions. These proofs consisted of the original introduction propped to his cabinet by Mr. Monroe, in his own handwriting and the draft of a letter from him to a friend, stating that these questions were answered affirmatively by every member of the cabinet.—Mr. Calhoun of course included. In addition to these records is a passage from the diary of J. Q. Adams, stating the same facts concerning the action of the members of Mr. Monroe's cabinet. These testimonies Mr. Benton insists are overwhelming. Mr. Calhoun attempts to escape it by saying that Missouri, at the preceding session, had presented herself for admission as a member of the Union. She had formed a constitution and government, in accordance with an act of congress. Her admission was refused on the ground that her constitution admitted of slavery; and she was remanded back to have the objectionable provision expunged. She refused to comply with the requisition, and at the next session again knocked at the door of congress for admission, with her constitution as it originally stood. Mr. Calhoun says that Missouri was then a state,—that if refused admission to the Union she would still have been a state, independent of the Union and the probable centre of a new confederacy. None were willing to contribute to such a result, and to avoid it the northern members opposed to her admission, were forced to propose a compromise, which the south accepted.

Mr. Benton says that every part of this statement is erroneous, and to such a degree as to destroy all reliance upon Mr. Calhoun's memory. He says that during the compromise session he and Mr. Lowndes resided together, and that at the preceding session Missouri presented her constitution, made under the act of congress, and applied for admission into the Union. Now this is an error. The constitution of Missouri was followed, and did not precede the compromise act. That act was passed March 7th, 1820, the constitution framed under it was signed July 19th, of the same year, and was presented to congress in the month of November following—congress in that year having met on the second Monday in November. Here then is an error not only in point of time, and a transposition of actually abolished slavery where it existed by law—in all the upper half of Louisiana—from man that has ever appeared on the face of the earth; and of this the anti-slavery party of the

Rocky Mountains—over a territory nearly a thousand miles square—nearly a million square miles—enough to make twenty states of 50,000 square miles each—more in fact than all California, New Mexico and Oregon put together.—Over all this vast territory the proviso, supported by Calhoun, abolished slavery—abolished it, then existing by law—and shut it up from the slave emigration of the south. And now what becomes of the *dogma*, in his mouth, and that of his followers, so recently invented, of no power in congress to legislate upon the subject of slavery in territories? what becomes in their mouths of the new fangled point of honor, just felt for the first time in thirty years, of insult to slave states in their exclusion from settlement to the territories bought by the blood and treasure of the whole Union? Louisiana was a territory, and congress legislated upon slavery in it, and legislated slavery out of a million of square miles of it, and Mr. Calhoun supported that legislation. Louisiana was a territory acquired by the treasure of the blood, of the whole Union; and the proviso of 1820, supported by Mr. Calhoun, shut up one half of it from slave emigration. If that is insult, he and his followers have stood being insulted most remarkably well for about thirty years; and perhaps would consult to their own self-respect, and lose nothing in public opinion, if they should continue standing it with like fortitude, for the remainder of their lives.

Mr. Benton quotes this action of Mr. Calhoun not to vindicate the right of congress to prohibit or abolish slavery in the territories but to shut the mouths of Mr. Calhoun and his followers.—It proceeds to say that in giving his cabinet support, where his voice was so potential to the abolition of slavery over a million of square miles in Louisiana, Mr. Calhoun did more than any one man has ever done towards abolishing slavery in the world. Holding, as he then did, the one-fifth part of the veto power, and commanding as his position was, as a southern man and a cabinet minister—a leading cabinet minister—the largest question ever started of free or slave soil, was then in his hands; and he decided it in favor of free. It was an immense boon to the anti-slavery party, then so numerous and ardent; but it was not the only service which he rendered them. Texas was then ours—a part of Louisiana—to the lower Rio Grand; large enough to form six great or ten common states. It was all slave territory, and looked to as the natural outlet of the southern states, with their great increasing slave population. It was given to the king of Spain—given away by treaty, and that treaty the work of Mr. Monroe's cabinet.—Mr. Calhoun being a member. And here there is no room for denial and non-recollection. For a long time Mr. Adams bore the blame of that session. A friend of Mr. Calhoun reproached him with it in the house of representatives. Mr. Adams was then alive, and present, and soon vindicated the truth of history. He showed that there was a division in the cabinet, upon the point; he was against it.—Mr. Calhoun for it—and Mr. Calhoun being a southern man, and the majority of the cabinet southern, he carried the day, and Texas was lost. I was not then in public life, but I wrote against that act, blaming Mr. Adams when I should have blamed Mr. Calhoun. By that session the expansion of slavery was stopped; the growth of slave states in the southwest was stopped; three hundred and fifty thousand square miles subject to American slavery, was cut off from American dominion, and presented to a foreign king. This was another great gratification to the abolitionists; but it was not all.—There was a strip of land, about large enough for two states, lying upon the Arkansas and Red rivers, and between Texas and the 36 deg. 30 min. of north latitude. This strip having escaped the compromise line on one side, and the Texas session on the other, was open to the formation of two respectable slave states. Mr. Calhoun was then still cabinet minister—secretary at war—had the Indians under his care—and was riding the hobby of their civilization. He required this strip to be given up to the Indians for their permanent abode; and thus it, also, was lost to the slave states. All Louisiana was then gone from them, except the fragment which was contained in the states of Missouri and Louisiana, and in the Territory of Arkansas. Even this fragment appeared to be too much to be left to the slave states, and a slice forty miles wide, and three hundred miles long, was cut off from Arkansas and given to the Indians; and the slaveholders with the slaves upon the slice, were required to remove from the cut off part, and fall back within the contracted limits. This was done by the Indian treaty. He was then vice president of the United States, and president of the senate.—I was a member of the senate—opposed to the ratification of this treaty—and came within one or two votes of defeating it. The slightest help from Mr. Calhoun would have defeated it, and saved the slave state of Arkansas that territory, and these salt springs, the loss of which she now has to lament. Taken all together—the compromise—the Texas session—the Indian domain and the slice from Arkansas, and Mr. Calhoun did more, in less time, to abolish slavery, diminish its area, and increase that of free soil, than any man that has ever appeared on the face of the earth; and of this the anti-slavery party of the

north were fully sensible, and duly grateful.—They gave proof of their gratitude. Mr. Calhoun was then candidate for vice president of the United States; he became the favorite of the north—beating even Mr. Adams, himself, on the free soil track. He beat him six votes in New York—ran head and neck with him through New Hampshire, Vermont and Rhode Island—was even through Massachusetts—and came a close second on the northern track! He actually beat Mr. Adams in abolition states—and with justice. He had done more than him for free soil, and with more merit; being himself an inhabitant of slave soil. I told him this in my first *Calhoun*, in the senate of the United States, four days after he put in his fire-brand resolutions, in his speech to show him to be the true author of the Mexican war.

Mr. Calhoun then disavowed all responsibility in the matter by saying that he was not then a member of congress; but evidence since developed shows that as a member of the cabinet, his opinion was more influential than it could have been in congress. Mr. Benton thus excuses these detailed personal references to Mr. Calhoun.—

I am mortified to dwell upon Mr. Calhoun. It is neither my habit, nor my pleasure to speak of men. In near thirty years that I have been in congress I have never brought the name of any man before the public. I am now forced to do it. Mr. Calhoun's resolutions are those of the Missouri legislature. They are identical. One is copied from the other. When the original is invalidated, the copy is of no avail. I am answering his resolutions and chide to do it. It is just and proper that I should do so. He is the prime mover and head contriver. I have had no chance to answer him in the senate, and it will not do to allow him to take a snap judgment upon me in Missouri, and carry disunion resolutions in my own state which he has been forced to abandon in the senate. Duty to the country requires me to answer him, and personal reasons reinforce that public duty. He has been unjustly attacking upon me for twenty years—ever since I stood by Jackson and the Union in the first war of nullification. His Duff Green Telegraph commenced upon me at the same time it did upon Jackson, and for the same cause—because we stood by the Union! Last summer, in his own state of South Carolina, where I never was, he dragged my name and that of Gen. Houston before his constituents, and denounced us in a public speech and held us up to public reprobation. He accused us of disunion to the south—the interpretation being that we would not join him in his scheme of a southern confederacy, to array one half the Union against the other, and form a southern confederacy. It was an audacious attack upon two absent gentlemen, and who, as senators, were entitled to senatorial courtesy from him. Neither Gen. Houston nor myself thought it right to suffer such an attack to pass with impunity; but we did not think the floor of the senate the proper place for replying to an attack made out of doors. The forum of our respective states was deemed the proper place. He had assailed us before his constituents, and we determined to answer him before ours. Gen. Houston has replied. He did so during that session of congress, in a published address to his constituents. It was published while Mr. Calhoun was in the city, and where he might answer it if he pleased. He did not so please. He stood mute—as if the antagonist was not worthy of notice—a privilege of dignity which did not belong to him after he had begun the attack. He said nothing; and in that he did better than when he denied his support of the Missouri compromise act. He did well in saying nothing. It was a case in which public attention should not be raised by controversy.—Houston soon showed what the charge of "disunion" meant, and then carried the war into Africa. He charged him with his designs against the Union for twenty years past, and supported what he said by an array of facts which could neither be explained away nor denied. That address of Houston's should be republished by the papers friendly to the Union. It is full of truth and patriotism—worthy of the disciple of Jackson—and killing to Calhoun. He did well not to fix public attention upon it by replying to it. I told Houston that I should reply in speech to my constituents; and that I am now doing.

This is one of my personal reasons for dwelling upon Mr. Calhoun; but I have another which I will now state. In the year 1844, as it will be remembered, when my fifth election was coming in the state, supported by every Calhoun man and every Calhoun newspaper in the state, and in the United States. There was a coincidence in their operations which showed that they were acted by a pattern. I knew at the time where it all came from; and the source has since been authentically revealed to me. There is a law in the moral world by which "murder will out." By virtue of that law one of those who were employed to do the work upon me, and who was a stranger to me, and afterwards repudiated, revealed the plot to me, and placed in my hands an original letter of instructions, of which the following is an extract:—

"With regard to the course of your paper, you can take the tone of the administration of the from * * * I think, however, and would recommend that you would confine yourself to

attacks upon Benton, showing that he has allied himself with the whigs on the Texas question; Quote Jackson's letter on Texas, where he denounced all as traitors to the country who oppose the treaty. Apply it to Benton. Proclaim that Benton, by attacking Mr. Tyler and his friends, and driving them from the party, is aiding the election of Mr. Clay; and charge him with doing this to defeat Mr. Polk and insure himself the succession in 1848; and claim that full justice be done to the acts and motives of John Tyler by the leaders. Harp upon these strings. Do not propose the union: it is the business of the democrats to do this, and arrange it to our perfect satisfaction. I quote here from our leading friend from the south. Such is the course which I recommend, and which you can pursue or not, according to your real attachment to the administration.

Look out for my leader of to-morrow as an indicator, and regard this letter as of the most strict and inviolable character."

I read this extract to Mr. Calhoun in the senate of the United States in February, 1847—four days after his fire-brand resolutions were introduced. He said he did not write it. I know he did not. Neither did he write the papers of the A. B. plot against Mr. Crawford, nor the resolutions of the last Missouri general assembly. He is no such bungler as that—When a paw is to go into the fire he prefers that of any cat or dog to his own. But he was secretary of state under Tyler at the time, and had dominion over three hundred newspapers, to each of which the same instructions were issued. They were intended for their guidance in the presidential election, and in the state elections of 1844, and especially for my own, which was coming on. I only read the extract which is special to myself. How well the instructions were obeyed was seen in this state, and in other states, and in all the presses and politicians which followed the lead of "our leading friend at the south." Benton—Clay—Whigs—Texas—Harp upon these strings, and harp they did; until the strings were worn out, and then the harps were hung upon the willows. Now a new set of strings are furnished, and from the same grapple commenced upon me at the same time it did upon Jackson, and for the same cause—because we stood by the Union! Last summer, in his own state of South Carolina, where I never was, he dragged my name and that of Gen. Houston before his constituents, and denounced us in a public speech and held us up to public reprobation. He accused us of disunion to the south—the interpretation being that we would not join him in his scheme of a southern confederacy, to array one half the Union against the other, and form a southern confederacy. It was an audacious attack upon two absent gentlemen, and who, as senators, were entitled to senatorial courtesy from him. Neither Gen. Houston nor myself thought it right to suffer such an attack to pass with impunity; but we did not think the floor of the senate the proper place for replying to an attack made out of doors. The forum of our respective states was deemed the proper place. He had assailed us before his constituents, and we determined to answer him before ours. Gen. Houston has replied. He did so during that session of congress, in a published address to his constituents. It was published while Mr. Calhoun was in the city, and where he might answer it if he pleased. He did not so please. He stood mute—as if the antagonist was not worthy of notice—a privilege of dignity which did not belong to him after he had begun the attack. He said nothing; and in that he did better than when he denied his support of the Missouri compromise act. He did well in saying nothing. It was a case in which public attention should not be raised by controversy.—Houston soon showed what the charge of "disunion" meant, and then carried the war into Africa. He charged him with his designs against the Union for twenty years past, and supported what he said by an array of facts which could neither be explained away nor denied. That address of Houston's should be republished by the papers friendly to the Union. It is full of truth and patriotism—worthy of the disciple of Jackson—and killing to Calhoun. He did well not to fix public attention upon it by replying to it. I told Houston that I should reply in speech to my constituents; and that I am now doing.

One makes the peace, permanence and welfare of our national Union depend upon strict adherence to the spirit and terms of the Missouri compromise in its application to new territory—that is to say, upon the constitutional right, and the equitable exercise of that right, to legislate upon slavery in the new territory, and to admit in part and prevent it in part: the other makes the dissolution of the Union dependent upon the same platform of fact and principle, denying the right of congress to admit or prohibit slavery in a territory—asserting its prohibition to be a violation of the constitution of the United States—an insult to the sovereignty of the states—and tending to the dissolution of the Union.

Yes, citizens! congress has the power to legislate upon slavery in territories, and to admit or prohibit its existence, in fact to compromise it. She has the constitutional power, but can never hereafter exercise it. The new dogma of no power in congress to legislate on the subject, has killed all compromise. Those who deny the power cannot vote for it; it would be a breach of their oath: those who want no slavery in the new territories will not vote for compromise, and thus extremes meet—combine against the middle—and defeat all compromise. The resolutions of Mr. Calhoun have done this; and to talk about compromise now, is to propose to call Methuselah from his tomb. The effect, if not the design, of his new dogma, was to kill compromise; and deal it is. "The constitution will not permit him and his followers to vote for any compromise line; opposition to the extension of slavery will not permit northern men to do it; and thus there is no chance for any line. Principle cannot be compromised. The Missouri compromise was not a principle, but of interests after the principle was established. The first question put by Mr. Monroe to his cabinet was as to the constitutional power of congress over the subject. That being established in the affirmative, the application of the principle was matter of detail and expediency.

[To be concluded next week.]

MOBILE CITIES. Bills to make Concord and Portsmouth cities have been passed by the Legislature of New Hampshire.

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